

**IN SUPPORT of House Bill No. 6578 - An Act Concerning Participation in the Electoral Process
and IN SUPPORT of Senate Bill No. 1017- An Act Concerning Election Administration**

March 9, 2021

Dear Senator Mae Flexer (Co-Chair), Representative Dan Fox (Co-Chair), Senator Rob Sampson (Ranking Member), Representative Gale Mastrofrancesco (Ranking Member) and esteemed members of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee:

My name is Richard Boritz and I live in Southbury. I am testifying in support of HB 6578 and SB 1017. Both bills expand voter access and will bring more people to the polls. Isn't that what we want from all citizens — engagement in our democratic process through voting?

HB 6578 expands Automatic Voter Registration beyond the Dept. of Motor Vehicles to other state agencies. This is a common-sense reform that will help increase democratic participation.

I also support restoring the right to vote to people on parole. There is no doubt that a significant number of Black and Latino people are disproportionately affected. The laws to disenfranchise felons dates back to the Civil War. They were a way to circumvent Reconstruction amendments and stamp out Black political power. It's about time that we change this.

SB 1017 will make it easier to vote by absentee ballot. Both my wife and I voted last November by dropping our absentee ballots in the drop box outside Southbury's Town Hall. This was safe and secure. About 5,500 absentee ballots were cast in Southbury — that is over 40% of the votes. Why not make it easier for the folks needing to avoid waiting on line on election day to vote this way?

I urge you to pass HB 6578 and SB 1017.

Thank you for all you do.

Richard Boritz
Southbury